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# USDA'S REPORT TO CONSUMERS

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## COOPERATIVE COMMITMENT MONTH

A Better Life in the 70's. October is Co-Op Month. For 1970, the observance for and by cooperatives is taking on a new dimension: Emphasis is on what cooperatives do -- not what they are. The new approach features the theme, "A Better Life in the 70's -- The Pledge of America's Cooperatives." Cooperatives are thus committing themselves to further efforts to increase rural incomes and to help bring about a higher quality of life and a better environment in rural communities. Marketing, supply, and related service cooperatives, the credit cooperatives that make up the Farm Credit System, and the rural electric and telephone cooperatives are all taking part in the month-long event. The U.S. Department of Agriculture is again supporting the Cooperative observance, an annual event begun nationally in 1964.

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"WE CARE" IS THE THEME OF THE 1970 NATIONAL 4-H WEEK, OCTOBER 4-10

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## BIG WEEK FOR SCHOOL LUNCHES

A Twenty-Four Year Lunch Break. Since 1946, when the National School Lunch Act was enacted, millions of school-age children across the Nation have enjoyed a real break for lunch. According to USDA's Food and Nutrition Service which administers the program, about 20.9 million children in nearly 77,000 schools were served more than 3.5 billion meals last year. Twenty-one percent of the meals were offered free or at greatly reduced prices to children whose parents could not afford the regular low price. Through Federal-State-Local cooperation, the National School Lunch Program has become the largest single food service industry in the Nation -- a 2-billion-dollar-a-year operation. Special ceremonies and activities will celebrate the 24th year of the program during the 1970 School Lunch Week, October 11 - 17. On October 14, many schools will observe the special week by serving the same menu. This "universal menu" includes chicken, homemade biscuit, butter, green peas, crisp coleslaw, cranberry jelly, oatmeal raisin cookie, and milk.



## CONSTRUCTION TIPS

For Do-It-Yourselfers. Thinking of building your own home? Or maybe a vacation hide-away? Check out the newly revised edition of the Forest Service's popular how-to-do-it handbook on home building--"Wood Frame House Construction." It's written and illustrated to be clearly understood by even the inexperienced do-it-yourselfer. All phases of construction are explained in detail, from location and excavation to maintenance and repair. You can get a copy of the 228-page volume (Agricultural Handbook No. 73) from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 for \$2.25.

Don't Be Floored By Poor Planning. "Selecting a House Plan" is the latest title in a series of USDA slide sets and filmstrips designed to help families plan housing. The new slide set is intended to help familiarize persons planning to buy or build a new home with the importance of carefully studying their family's needs and wants in relation to the floor plan -- before selecting a plan for the new house. The 47-frame color presentation, as well as the other selections in the series, was prepared by agricultural engineers and home economists from Land Grant universities and the USDA's Extension Service. Some other titles in the series include: "A Good Kitchen for Your Home," "Planning the Family Workroom," "Foundations for Your Home," "Exterior Building Materials for Your Home," and "Heating and Cooling for Your Home." With the exception of "Heating and Cooling for Your Home," which costs \$9.00 as a slide set and \$6.50 as a filmstrip, all are available as slide sets for \$8.00 from the Photography Division, Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. As filmstrips they cost \$5.50 from the Photo Lab, Inc., 3825 Georgia Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. Copies of an illustrated guide accompany each presentation.

## USDA'S FOOD DETECTIVES

A Consumer Protection Program. A super-sleuth with a fancy crime lab is not really necessary to determine the culprit in most cases of illness where meat or poultry is the suspected source. The leading suspect is someone outside the plant -- a retailer, a caterer, or a housewife -- who fails to follow a few basic rules in caring for meat or poultry. This verdict is based on nearly 2 years of investigations by a special team in USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service. The team, known as the Toxicology Group, is called into action whenever meat or poultry is the suspected cause of an outbreak of food poisoning. Alerted by field personnel or other sources, the group cooperates with local public health agencies to speed identification of the product responsible for the illness, the amount of product involved, and the factors causing the disease. In-depth analyses of any outbreak includes determining necessary steps to prevent recurrence. The group's thorough sleuthing has uncovered some startling cases of mishandling that have led to food poisoning: Sliced turkey held for 5 or 6 hours in a warming oven; a turkey transported on a long trip in the hot trunk of a car; beef roast contaminated by unsanitary utensils, working surfaces -- and hands. Tips on proper handling and storage of meat and poultry -- and other foods -- can be found in "Keeping Foods Safe to Eat," (H&G-162). Single copies of this USDA publication are available free from the Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.



## BY (IN AND ON) THE SEA

County Agents In Hip Boots. Extension agents and specialists of Oregon's Cooperative Extension Service are helping the people of their State wisely develop and use their marine resources. The Extension workers are providing a link between the users of the sea (fishermen, seafood processors, port and marine developers) and people who have the information to help solve the many problems encountered (oceanographers, marine researchers, marine economists, seafood technologists, marine science educators). Extension marine agents, stationed in or near each major Oregon fishing port, are literally "county agents in hip boots." They take the findings of the marine scientists directly to the fishermen and encourage them to keep logbooks for research and to share practical information of value to other fishermen. Under the direction of the Extension oceanographer, researchers, government agencies, and industry cooperate in sponsoring "Albacore Central," an oceanographic and environmental reporting service which broadcasts daily messages and publishes weekly bulletins for the tuna fishing fleet. Base for the Extension Service operation is the Marine Advisory Program (MAP) at Oregon State University. The MAP is the Extension arm of the Sea Grant Program enacted by Congress in 1966 to provide activities aimed at communicating information to persons interested in developing marine resources, to scientists, and to the general public.

## GOOD NIGHT, SWEET BUG

No Need Now For Noxious Notions. By October, you can usually say good night or good bye to the summer insects that haunted your yard and garden; the pests are either dormant or dead. So put away your leftover pesticides -- safely. The U.S. Department of Agriculture advises you to read the label to see if it has any special directions about storage. For instance, if the pesticide is flammable, don't store it near heat. Store the pesticide in its original container, closed tightly and well labeled. Don't place it near food or where it could get mixed up with cleaning supplies, medicines, or other household items. And, by all means, store it out of the reach of children and pets.

## THE WORLD -- AS THE STUDENT SEES IT

Science Made Relevant. Today's students are very concerned with major social problems: pollution, over population, and hunger. A major problem of today's teachers is how to make subject matter relevant to the student's world -- as the student sees it. To help teachers (the establishment), the Agricultural Research Service is designing science activities that relate to today's problems. The activities, developed by science teachers working with ARS researchers, are available in a new USDA publication series called "Science Study Aids." Actual research projects are simplified and converted into experiments, activities, and demonstrations. These include water testing and treatment, air pollution collection methods, the effects of air pollution on plant growth, and the effects of chemicals on plants and animals. There are study aids designed for elementary grades; others for high school and college. Copies of these ARS materials are available from the Educational Services Branch, Room 116, Center Building, Agricultural Research Service, Beltsville, Md. 20705.

## BEANS, PEAS, AND LENTILS

Span the Centuries. Although centuries old in tradition, dry beans, peas, and lentils are modern, up-to-date foods. They are one of today's bargains, providing a wealth of energy and nutrition at a nominal cost per pound. A new USDA publication on the subject, "How to Buy Dry Beans, Peas, and Lentils," tells you how to buy and use these versatile and popular foods. The pamphlet contains color photographs and descriptions to help you choose good quality products and gives some short cuts for cooking. For a free copy of the publication (H&G-177) send a post card request to the Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

## SPECIAL RECREATION AREAS

For the Handicapped. So much public interest has been expressed in the several nature trails for the blind and handicapped developed in National Forests, USDA's Forest Service has decided to set aside some recreation areas developed especially for handicapped people. One such area is on the Inyo National Forest in California and another is across the country in the Appalachian National Forest in Florida. Both feature gently sloping, paved trails; picnic tables and fishing piers which will accomodate wheelchairs; and restroom facilities with wide doors and handrails. The Mammoth Lakes Area in California includes a 17-unit campground set up to be used by the handicapped. It also has nature trails which can be used by both persons in wheelchairs and the blind. A special feature of the Trout Pond Recreation Area in Florida is slightly raised "touch plates" set in the paths. These plates, which can easily be located by the blind using canes, indicate turns and forks in the pavement that lead to individual picnic areas. Both recreation areas are open only to the handicapped and their families. For further information, contact the Forest Supervisors at the respective forests: Inyo National Forest, 2957 Birch St., Bishop, Calif. 93514; Appalachian National Forest, 214 South Bronough St., Box 1050, Tallahassee, Fla. 32302.

## OCTOBER PLENTIFUL FOODS



A Dozen Dandy Ideas for October. Shiny, crisp, juicy apples add to the colors, tastes and sounds of Autumn. In fact, half the fun of eating an apple is the sound -- ask any kid. Fresh apples and two relatives, applesauce and apple juice, are included on the October Plentiful Foods List. Making up the rest of the dandy dozen on this month's list for smart food buyers are pork, broiler-fryers, dry beans, canned peaches, canned salmon, onions, eggs, potatoes, and dried prunes. Plentiful Foods for November include rice, turkeys, potatoes, onions, fresh apples, canned applesauce, apple juice, fresh cranberries, cranberry sauce, fruit cocktail, walnuts, dry split peas, pork, and broiler-fryers.

SERVICE is a monthly newsletter of consumer interest. It is designed for those who report to the individual consumer rather than for mass distribution. For information about items in this issue, write: Lillie Vincent, Editor of Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Information, Washington, D.C. 20250.